

What is claimed is:

1. A method for drilling wells in which a drill bit is rotated at the end of a drill string comprising tubular members joined together and mud is circulated through the tubular drill string, in which method tubular members are added to or removed from the drill string whilst circulation of mud continues.
2. A method as claimed in Claim 1 in which there are means which seal off the circulating mud and other fluids from the environment whilst they are still circulating.
3. A method as claimed in Claim 1 in which there is a coupler which connects the tubulars together and mud at the appropriate pressure is supplied in the immediate vicinity of the tubular connection that is about to be broken such that the flow of mud so provided overlaps with flow of mud from the top drive rotating the drill string and, as the tubular separates from the drill string, the flow of mud to the separated tubular is stopped.
4. A method as claimed in Claim 3 in which the separated tubular is totally separated from the drill string by the closure of a blind preventer or similar device.
5. A method as claimed in Claim 3 in which the coupler incorporates clamping means adapted to grip the tubulars and there is a preventer mounted above and below the clamping means to prevent escape of oil-well fluids and which coupler incorporates passageways for circulating mud and other fluids.